

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel non-elected claims 8-9 and 11-21.

Please amend claims 1-7 and 10, and add new claim 22 to read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for isolating disseminated tumor cells from a cell-containing body fluids, comprising passing characterized in that the a cell-containing body fluid or parts thereof that comprises a disseminated tumor cell ~~are passed~~ through a screen having a mesh or pore width of about 15 to 30 μm to separate non-cancer cells from disseminated tumor cells, wherein the disseminated tumor cells and the retained cell fraction is obtained ~~are~~ retained on the screen, and wherein the body fluid is selected from the group consisting of blood and bone marrow.

2. (Currently Amended) The method as ~~claimed in~~ either claim 1 or claim 3, characterized in that wherein the screen has a mesh or pore width of about 20 μm .

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The A~~ A method for isolating disseminated tumor cells from a cell-containing body fluid ~~as claimed in claim 1 or 2, comprising separating cellular components from non-cellular components in a body fluid that comprises a disseminated tumor cell~~ characterized to obtain in that a cell-containing fraction is first isolated from the body fluid; resuspending the cell-containing fraction in a suspension medium; and passing the resuspended cell-containing fraction through a screen having a mesh or pore width of about 15 to 30 μm to separate non-cancer cells from disseminated tumor cells, wherein the disseminated tumor cells are retained on the screen, and wherein the body fluid is selected from the group consisting of blood and bone marrow and subsequently screened.

4. (Currently Amended) The method as ~~claimed in~~ any one of claims 1- to 3, characterized in that comprising removing from the screen the retained disseminated tumor cells ~~retained on the screen are removed from the screen, where appropriate in a mixture with non-cancer cells.~~

5. (Currently Amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ according to any of claims ~~1 to 4~~, wherein removing the retained disseminated tumor cells comprises ~~characterized in that a~~ passing a liquid is ~~passed through the screen in a direction opposite to that in which the~~ body fluid or part thereof or resuspended cell-containing fraction is passed. ~~the opposite direction to~~ obtain a cell-containing wash liquid.

6. (Currently Amended) The method ~~as claimed in any of the~~ preceding according to either ~~claims~~ claim 1 or claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the body fluid is ~~used is~~ blood, bone marrow, lymph, urine, sputum, effusion, amniotic fluid, aspirate, colon lavage, lung lavage, bronchial lavage, bladder irrigation fluid, feces.

7. (Currently Amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ according to either claim 1 or claim 36, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the body fluid ~~used is~~ blood bone marrow.

Claims 8-9 (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) The use of a screen having a mesh or pore width of about 15 to 30 μm for isolating disseminated tumor cells from a cell-containing body fluid, wherein the body fluid is selected from the group consisting of blood and bone marrow s.

Claims 11-21 (Cancelled)

22. (New) The method according to claim 3, wherein the cell-containing fraction is isolated by subjecting the body fluid to density gradient centrifugation.